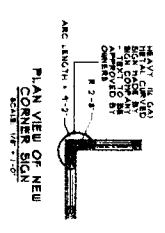


CORDOVA STREET - SOUTH ELEVATION
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"



NOTES

1. MATERIALS AS INDICATED ON THIS DRAWING ARE FOR INFORMATION ONLY. THE CONTRACTOR SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL NECESSARY PERMITS AND APPROVALS FROM THE APPROPRIATE AGENCIES.
2. THE FINISHED FLOOR FINISH FOR THE EXISTING AREA, EXCEPT BEAMS SHALL BE AS SHOWN ON THE EXISTING DRAWINGS AND SHALL BE VERIFIED BY THE CONTRACTOR.

DESIGNED BY ARCHITECT: THE ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATES
 ARCHITECT: THE ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATES
 PROJECT: KORET LOFTS INC. RESTORATION
 LOCATION: 300 CORDOVA ST. VANCOUVER, B.C.
 DATE: 11/11/11

ARCHITECT: THE ARCHITECTS ASSOCIATES
 440 - 64 AVENUE STREET
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CLIENT: KORET LOFTS INC.
 300 CORDOVA ST.
 VANCOUVER, B.C.
 PROJECT NO: 2118

DATE: JAN 2000
 BY: [Signature]
 CHECKED: [Signature]
 TITLE: ARCHITECT

McLennan & McFeely Building (Koret Building)
55-99 East Cordova Street
Statement of Significance
Commonwealth, Draft, February 2004

Historic Place

The historic place consists of the large five-storey brick-and-stone commercial building at the northwest corner of East Cordova and Columbia Streets, in historic Gastown's eastern commercial district; the place includes the former Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) right of way, which cuts diagonally across the northwest corner of the property.

Heritage Value

The McLennan and McFeely Building has heritage value for demonstrating the rise of Vancouver over Victoria as British Columbia's commercial centre and for being a large and significant warehouse building that represents well the commercial architecture in Gastown in the early twentieth century.

When the Canadian Pacific Railway selected Vancouver as the terminus of its transcontinental line, Vancouver quickly surpassed Victoria and New Westminster and became the dominant commercial city on Canada's west coast. This is illustrated clearly in the growth and repositioning of McLennan, McFeely and Co. Ltd. Robert Purves McLennan, a Nova Scotian who arrived in Victoria in 1884 and established himself in manufacturing architectural metalwork, and his friend Edward John McFeely, an Ontarian with whom he had worked in Winnipeg, and whom he called to the coast a year later, joined in partnership. They quickly grew from a Victoria-based firm with a Vancouver branch office to becoming large-scale importers and distributors of hardware and building supplies based in Vancouver, capitalizing on the opportunity provided by the railway and by the rapid growth of settlement and industry in British Columbia and the West.

The importance of warehousing – and this was one of the largest warehouses in Vancouver – cannot be understated, as it demonstrated the place of Vancouver as the destination for goods manufactured in eastern Canada, as well as the point of distribution for commercial products destined to BC and Yukon. This mode of commerce firmly established the federal government policy of the time, of seeing the West as a 'colony' of the east. The resulting tensions have coloured Canadian politics ever since.

The importance of the McLennan and McFeely operation is illustrated in this large Gastown warehouse, built in 1906 adjacent to the CPR railway tracks, which cut a swath through the property and facilitated receiving and shipping goods. The new facility enabled the company to distribute goods to its various outlets. Its stores were found as far north as Atlin, just south of the Yukon border, and in Dawson – communities whose economies were products of the Klondike Gold Rush, although the firm's (and Gastown's) prosperity continued far beyond that event.

The building's architectural value lies in its simple and handsome Commercial Style design, representative of warehouses in Gastown; and in its unusually large scale, with more than 15,000 m² (150,000 sq. ft.) of floor space. The original portion, a five-storey building with a masonry exterior and heavy timber frame construction, was built on 7 lots in 1906. It was designed by Vancouver architect Edward Evans Blackmore, a significant designer whose other projects at this time included the Cambie Street YMCA and the first Pantages Theatre. The warehouse replaced a smaller building a few blocks west. A two-storey garage was added at the west end of the site in 1912, indicating the growing importance of rubber-tire transportation, and this addition was raised to five storeys in 1925, repeating the original elevation design. The growing firm required yet more space, and so McLennan and McFeely acquired first (by 1910) a portion, and then (after 1925) all, of the adjacent two-storey building at 211-235 Columbia Street (the 'Commercial Block'). The two structures were connected over the lane with elevated walkways (by McCarter and Nairne, 1936 and 1939). In 1930 the firm expanded further with a new warehouse at Powell Street and Commercial Drive (subsequently enlarged) and in 1936 opened a retail store at 556 Seymour Street.

The firm remained in this building through the 1950s, towards the latter period under the name McLennan, McFeely and Prior. By the 1960s the company had been acquired by British-owned Acklands (now Acklands-Grainger), a major supplier of industrial products, with 200 outlets and 8 distribution centres in Canada. This was part of a larger pattern of the sale of family companies to external owners.

By 1975, sportswear manufacturers Koret of California (Canada) had acquired the Cordova Street building, using it for the same purposes – as a regional distribution warehouse. Koret retained the lower floors until 1999, while the upper storeys were used for film production and art studios. This represents the changing uses in Gastown particularly, and Vancouver more generally, from wholesale / commercial to the 'cultural industries.' The building further has value for potentially representing the most recent land use change to live/work accommodation, as an application for conversion to loft studios was made to the City of Vancouver in 2003.

Character-defining Elements

- The massing of the building directly up against the two street frontages, the lane, and the CPR right of way
- The swath cut out of the property by the CPR right of way, which is valuable as an open space and an interpretive opportunity
- The loading dock on the rear elevation, at the railway right of way, which demonstrates the relationship to the train tracks
- The two street elevations, with the 'pier-and-spandrel' treatment of the brickwork on the four upper floors
- The brick corbelling (rather than the more common metal cornice) at the roofline
- The stone window lintels and sills
- The wood-sash double-hung windows

- The stone string course below the second floor
- The lane and right-of-way elevations, including their arched window heads
- The stone piers at the ground floor
- The large display windows on the ground floor, with wood dividing bars
- The exposed heavy timber frame on the interior
- The large interior open spaces
- The bridges (pedestrian overpasses) over the lane, connecting the historic place with the adjacent building at 211 Columbia Street